



June 4, 2014

Honorable Doc Hastings  
United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Peter DeFazio  
United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Hastings and Ranking Member DeFazio:

The Association of Oregon Counties, which represents all 36 of the State's counties, wants the House Natural Resources Committee to know that we support H.R. 4272, the Forest Access in Rural Communities Act, sponsored by Congressman Greg Walden among other Members of Congress.

Eastern Oregon is dominated by National Forests. It is a way of life for Oregonians to have access to these vast acreages. Recent U.S. Forest Service travel management planning and inadequate forest health management have directly and negatively affected our communities near the National Forests. In spite of a wealth of first-hand knowledge locally about these forests, the sense here is that policies are driven from Washington, D.C., without regard to distinct local conditions and in a one-size-fits-all direction.

H.R. 4272 will ensure local knowledge is applied to federal decision-making on access. Governing bodies of directly affected counties, those who represent Oregonians who live among and depend upon the National Forests, will be able to be in direct partnership with the Forest Service on decisions to close or decommission a road in the National Forest.

Please give serious consideration to H.R. 4272, hear it, and pass it to the full House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Earl Fisher", with a stylized, flowing script.

Commissioner Earl Fisher, Columbia County  
President, Association of Oregon Counties